

**Amendment to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-68 (Cancelled)

69. (Currently amended) A method of screening for a modulator of Smurf activity which comprises detecting modulation of Smurf activity in the presence of a test compound relative to Smurf activity in the absence of the test compound, wherein the Smurf activity detected is the activity of a Smurf comprising a WW domain and/or and a HECT domain, [[and]] wherein the Smurf has an amino acid sequence similarity of greater than [[80%]] 90% with the amino acid sequence depicted in SEQ ID NO:2, and wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide, ubiquitination of a TGF $\beta$  receptor or interaction of a Smurf WW domain with a PPXY domain of a Smad polypeptide.

70. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide in a host cell.

71. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the Smurf activity is interaction of a Smurf WW domain with a PPXY domain of a Smad polypeptide.

72. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 71, wherein the test compound is screened for the ability to inhibit the interaction.

73. (Cancelled)

74. (Cancelled)

75. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the Smurf activity detected is the activity of a Smurf comprising the amino acid sequence depicted in SEQ ID NO:2.

76. (Cancelled)

77. (Cancelled)

78. (Currently amended) A method of screening for a modulator of Smurf activity which comprises detecting modulation of Smurf activity in the presence of a test compound relative to Smurf activity in the absence of the test compound, wherein the Smurf activity detected is activity of a human Smurf comprising the amino acid sequence depicted in SEQ ID NO:4, and wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide in a host cell, interaction of a Smurf WW domain with a PPXY domain of a Smad polypeptide, or ubiquitination of a TGF $\beta$  receptor.

79. (Cancelled)

80. (Cancelled)

81. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide.

82. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide in a host cell.

83. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the Smurf activity is interaction of a Smurf WW domain with a PPXY domain of a Smad polypeptide.

84. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 83, wherein the test compound is screened for the ability to inhibit the interaction.

85. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a TGF $\beta$  receptor.

86. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the screening assay is conducted *in vitro*.

87. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the screening assay is conducted in a host cell.

88. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a Smad polypeptide.

89. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the Smurf activity is ubiquitination of a TGF $\beta$  receptor.

90. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the screening assay is conducted *in vitro*.

91. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the screening assay is conducted in a host cell.

92-101 (Canceled)

102. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 69, wherein the screening assay is conducted *in vivo*.

103. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 78, wherein the screening assay is conducted *in vivo*.

104-106 (Canceled)